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#### IV.—THE PROVINCE OF ENGLISH PHILOLOGY.<sup>1</sup>

Perhaps no reproach is oftener addressed to those who call themselves philologists than that they are unconcerned with that beauty which has furnished a distinctive epithet for the word 'literature' in the phrase *belles lettres*, that they lack imagination and insight, and that they are quite unfitted to impart to others a sense of the spiritual values which inhere in the productions that form the subject-matter of their studies. An eloquent writer, who is himself a capable investigator, has recently presented this view in an essay which deserves the attention of every teacher of literature, and especially of every teacher of English literature.

I make no apology for quoting a rather long extract from the essay in question, since the arraignment puts into definite form what a good many people have been feeling and intimating, and the philologist is bound to meet the attack either by mending his ways, or by showing that the critic, with the best intentions in the world, has not fully comprehended the purposes of philology, or has perhaps taken a part for the whole. Here, then, is the passage :

"And so very whimsical things sometimes happen, because of this scientific and positivist spirit of the age, when the study of the literature of any language is made part of the curriculum of our colleges. The more delicate and subtle purposes of the study are put quite out of countenance, and literature is commanded to assume the phrases and the methods of science. . . . It is obvious that you cannot have universal education without restricting your teaching to such things as can be universally understood. It is plain that you cannot impart 'university methods' to thousands, or create 'investigators' by the score, unless you confine your uni-

<sup>1</sup> Address of the President of the Modern Language Association of America, at its Annual Meeting held at the University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, Pa., December, 1897.

versity education to matters which dull men can investigate, your laboratory training to tasks which mere plodding diligence and submissive patience can compass. Yet, if you do so limit and constrain what you teach, you thrust taste and insight and delicacy of perception out of the schools, exalt the obvious and the merely useful above the things which are only imaginatively or spiritually conceived, make education an affair of tasting and handling and smelling. . . .

"You have nowadays, it is believed, only to heed the suggestions of pedagogics in order to know how to impart Burke or Browning, Dryden or Swift. There are certain practical difficulties, indeed; but there are ways of overcoming them. You must have strength if you would handle with real mastery the firm fibre of these men; you must have a heart, moreover, to feel their warmth, an eye to see what they see, an imagination to keep them company, a pulse to experience their delights. But if you have none of these things, you may make shift to do without them. You may count the words they use, instead, note the changes of phrase they make in successive revisions, put their rhythm into a scale of feet, run their allusions—particularly their female allusions—to cover, detect them in their previous reading. Or, if none of these things please you, or you find the big authors difficult or dull, you may drag to light all the minor writers of their time, who are easy to understand. By setting an example in such methods you render great services in certain directions. You make the higher degrees of our universities available for the large number of respectable men who can count, and measure, and search diligently; and that may prove no small matter. You divert attention from thought, which is not always easy to get at, and fix attention upon language, as upon a curious mechanism, which can be perceived with the bodily eye, and which is worthy to be studied for its own sake, quite apart from anything it may mean. You encourage the examination of forms, grammatical and metrical, which can be quite accurately determined and quite exhaustively catalogued. You bring all the visible phenomena of writing to light and into ordered system. You go further, and show how to make careful literal identification of stories somewhere told ill and without art with the same stories told over again by the masters, well and with the transfiguring effect of genius. You thus broaden the area of

science ; for you rescue the concrete phenomena of the expression of thought—the necessary syllabification which accompanies it, the inevitable juxtaposition of words, the constant use of particles, the habitual display of roots, the inveterate repetition of names, the recurrent employment of meanings heard or read—from their confusion with the otherwise unclassifiable manifestations of what had hitherto been accepted, without critical examination, under the lump term ‘literature,’ simply for the pleasure and spiritual edification to be got from it.” (Woodrow Wilson, *Mere Literature, and Other Essays*, 1896, p. 2.)

This is a stern indictment to bring against the philologist—the ‘mere philologist,’ as our author might say—and if it contains the whole truth, and nothing but the truth ; if things are quite as bad as here represented, and the fault is the fault of certain innovators, who usurp the domain of better men with their science falsely so-called ; then it behoves us to be on our guard, lest we also be entangled in the net they have woven for their own feet, and so become involved with them in a common destruction.

Let us first see, however, whether some of these matters are susceptible of being differently stated. And first, is it quite certain that the evils complained of are due to the scientific and positivist spirit of this age, and to the effort after universal education ? It is more than two thousand years since Herodicus described the followers of the critic Aristarchus as ‘buzzing in corners, busy with monosyllables.’ It is more than eighteen hundred years since Seneca thus declaimed against what he understood by the philological study of literature :

“A grammarian occupies himself with the care of speech, or, if he takes a wider view of his art, possibly with history. The most that he can do is to extend the limits so as to include poetry. Which of these openeth a way to virtue ? Doth the unfolding of syllables, the niceties of speech, the memory of fables, or the law and syntax of verses ? Which of these taketh away fear, casteth out covetousness, bridleth

lust? . . . Let us grant unto them that Homer was a philosopher; in that case he must have learnt wisdom before he wrote poetry; wherefore let us learn those things which made Homer a wise man. . . . What supposest thou that it profiteth to inquire into the ages of Patroclus and Achilles? Seekest thou rather Ulysses' errors than seest how thou canst prevent thine own? There is no time for hearing whether Ulysses was shipwrecked between Italy and Sicily, or passed the boundaries of the known world. . . . Tempests of the mind do daily toss us, and vice driveth us into all the evils which Ulysses suffered. Beauty there is to beguile the eyes, and she cometh not in the guise of a foe: hence come cruel monsters, which delight in men's blood; hence come deceitful allurements of the ears; hence shipwrecks, and so many varieties of evil. Teach me this thing, how I may love my country, my wife, and my father; how even, suffering shipwreck, I may steer my ship into so virtuous a haven."

Here, then, is a strong argument against literary scholarship. Observe at once its admirable cogency and its comprehensive sweep. The goal of all education should be to render men wise and virtuous; therefore wisdom and virtue should be taught directly, to the exclusion of all other matters. How obvious and how convincing! The objection to literary scholarship has the same force as applied to other studies. This is apparent from the very title of Seneca's essay, *That the Liberal Arts are not to be Classed among Good Things, and Contribute Nothing to Virtue*. But let us hear his own application of the principle to the study of music and geometry.

"Let us pass," he says, "to geometry and music; nothing shalt thou find in them which forbiddeth fear, or forbiddeth covetousness, of which whosoever is ignorant, in vain knoweth other things. . . . Thou teachest me how there cometh a harmony from sharp and bass sounds, and how a chord may be composed of dissonant strings. Do thou make rather that my mind may be in harmony with itself, and that my counsels be not out of time. . . . Thou knowest what a straight line is; what profiteth it thee if thou art ignorant of what is crooked in life?"

But there is another argument against all learning, or rather against all learning except philosophy. Learning is a positive incumbrance. The mind is limited in its capacity. There is only a given amount of space in the mind to include everything. All the room occupied by learning is so much subtracted from that which might have harbored virtue. Hear once more the incomparable Seneca: "Of whatsoever part of divine and human affairs thou takest hold, thou shalt be wearied with the huge abundance of things to be sought out and to be learned. . . . Virtue will not lodge itself in so narrow a room; a great matter desireth a large space; let all else be driven out, let the whole breast be empty for it."

With Seneca, the conclusion of the whole matter is extremely simple. Philosophy is the science which teaches wisdom and virtue. Therefore neglect everything else, and study philosophy. In his own words: "Philosophy . . . raiseth the whole structure, foundations and all. Mathematics, so to speak, are a superficial art; it buildeth upon another's foundations, it receiveth its principles from others, by the benefit of which it cometh to further conclusions. If, by its own exertions, it could come to truth, if it could comprehend the nature of the whole world, I should be more grateful to it. The mind is made perfect by one thing—namely, by the unchangeable knowledge of good and bad things, for which alone philosophy is competent. But none other art inquireth about good and bad things."

But, unfortunately, the trail of the serpent is over philosophy even. Seneca can not help admitting that his very philosophers are not quite what they should be. "I speak," says he, "of liberal studies; how much of what is useless do philosophers possess, how much of what is unpractical! They also have descended to the distinction of syllables, and to the proprieties of conjunctions and prepositions, and to envy grammarians, to envy geometricians. . . . Thus it is come to pass that, with all their diligence, they know rather to speak than to live."

Now I would not be understood as instituting a parallel in all respects between the able and brilliant writer first quoted, with certain of whose positions I find myself in agreement, and the moralist who thus ruthlessly, like another Caliph Omar, would sweep away all learning from the face of the earth. Yet I cannot help seeing in the essay of the former an implication that taste and insight and delicacy of perception shall be imparted directly by the schools, in a manner not dissimilar, it may be apprehended, to that in which the Senecan wisdom and virtue were to be taught. Perhaps this is possible; I would that it were. Is there one who listens to me who would not gladly devote his whole energies to the direct communication of taste and insight and delicacy of perception, and still more of wisdom and virtue, were that possible without the adventitious aid of learning? If we could train the mind to exact and severe thinking, to endure the toil involved in continuous attention to the same subject, without invoking the processes of mathematical science, or any equivalent discipline, to come to our assistance, how the college curriculum might speedily be relieved of one of its heaviest burdens! But we have already seen that even Seneca's philosophers were not quite equal to his demands; they also "descended to the distinction of syllables, and to the proprieties of conjunctions and prepositions." These philosophers must have felt, at least after Seneca's rebuke, how far they were derogating from the inwardness of their mission. Yet, if they lived a quarter of a century longer, they were surely not a little comforted by the utterances of Quintilian, who in one place says: "Was Cicero the less of an orator because he was most attentive to the study of grammar, and because, as appears from his letters, he was a rigid exactor, on all occasions, of correct language from his son? Did the writings of Julius Cæsar *On Analogy* diminish the vigor of his intellect? Or was Messala less elegant as a writer because he devoted whole books, not merely to single words, but even to single letters? These studies are injurious, not to those

who pass through them, but to those who dwell immoderately on them."

But are modern times barren of such instances as Quintilian has noted? Milton, great poet that he was, did not disdain to write an *Accidence commenced Grammar*, and I have never heard that his poetry was the worse for it. Milton's exemplar, the first poet of Italy, a man eminent for taste and insight and delicacy of perception, as well as for wisdom and virtue, wrote a book *On the Vulgar Tongue*, which he began on this wise: "Since we do not find that any one before us has treated of a science of the Vulgar Tongue, while, in fact, we see that this tongue is highly necessary for all, inasmuch as not only men, but even women and children, strive, in so far as Nature allows them, to acquire it; and since it is our wish to enlighten to some little extent the discernment of those who walk through the streets like blind men, generally fancying that those things which are really in front of them are behind them; we will endeavor, by the aid of the Wisdom which breathes from Heaven, to be of service to the speech of the common people, not only by drawing the water for such a draught from our own understanding, but by taking or compiling from others, mixing the most useful information from each with our own." In this work, he whom the difficulties of language had never prevented from saying just what he desired to say, went on to write chapters whose titles are such as these: "On the Dialect of Romagna, and Some of the Dialects beyond the Po, especially the Venetian;" "Of the Structure of the Lines in Poetry, and their Variation by means of Syllables;" "Of what Lines Stanzas are made, and of the Number of Syllables in the Lines;" "Of the Relation of the Rimes, and in what order they are to be placed in the Stanza;" "Of the Number of Lines and Syllables in the Stanza." Does it not look as though Dante had, in the words of our critic, come perilously near to rescuing from their confusion with literature "the concrete phenomena of the expression of thought—the necessary



syllabification which accompanies it, the inevitable juxtaposition of words?"

Passing over such men as Ben Jonson, who wrote an English grammar, and made an extensive collection of the grammars of various languages, but at the same time set the fashions in English literature for several decades, let us dwell for a moment on the authors cited above as deserving better treatment than they are likely to receive at the hands of the modern expositor? Is it possible that the attitude of Burke and Browning, of Dryden and Swift, toward philological investigation, is in any respect similar to that of Dante and of Milton? I turn to Burke's essay *On the Sublime and Beautiful*, and find such headings as these: "Color considered as Productive of the Sublime;" "Smell and Taste; Bitters and Stenches;" "The Effect of Words;" "How Words influence the Passions." Moreover, I find in this work such passages as the following: "It is hard to repeat certain sets of words, though owned by themselves unoperative, without being in some degree affected, especially if a warm and effecting tone of voice accompanies them; as suppose,

Wise, valiant, generous, good, and great.

These words, by having no application, ought to be unoperative; but when words commonly sacred to great occasions are used, we are affected by them even without the occasions."

I turn to Browning, and, reading *The Grammarian's Funeral*, can not doubt that he was in sympathy with the character he has so vividly and feelingly delineated.

I turn to Dryden, and find him writing in this vein: "Thus it appears necessary that a man should be a nice critic in his mother tongue before he attempts to translate a foreign language. Neither is it sufficient that he be able to judge of words and style, but he must be a master of them too; he must perfectly understand his author's tongue, and absolutely command his own." Again he says: "All the versification and little variety of Claudian is included within the compass

of four or five lines, and then he begins again in the same tenor ; perpetually closing his sense at the end of a verse, and that verse commonly what they call golden, or two substantives and two adjectives, with a verb between them to keep the peace." Does not this look like the prefigurement of a modern inquiry into end-stopped and run-on lines ?

I turn to Swift, and am reminded by the revival of the proposition to establish an English Academy that he wrote a *Proposal for Correcting, Improving, and Ascertaining the English Tongue*, involving the creation of a society similar to the French Academy for that purpose.

Even the author who instances Burke and Browning, Dryden and Swift, as writers who should be interpreted in a larger and freer manner, is willing, in a noble oration, to affirm : " What you cannot find a substitute for is the classics as literature ; and there can be no first-hand contact with that literature if you will not master the grammar and the syntax which convey its subtle power." From this it would appear that it is proper to master the grammar and syntax of the *ancient* classics ; which he who will may harmonize with the objections which were quoted at the beginning of these remarks.

Recalling those objections, we have seen that they were in some measure anticipated centuries ago ; that Seneca would have had all ancillary study of literature replaced by the direct inculcation of the essential qualities or virtues that literature embodies ; that his criticism held equally true of all liberal studies except philosophy, and that even philosophy was not exempt from his censure ; but that, on the other hand, some of the noblest statesmen, orators, and poets, have busied themselves with the very inquiries which we have heard so unsparingly condemned ; and that we are thus presented with the singular anomaly that that is forbidden to the humble expounder of classical authors which was practised and recommended by the classical authors themselves ; and that is forbidden to the student of our own literature which

is reckoned, by the same authority, as highly laudable in a student of the masterpieces of antiquity.

There must, one would infer, be something inherently attractive and valuable about learning, which enables it to survive such attacks as those of Seneca; there must be something inherently attractive and valuable about the learning which occupies itself with literature, to make it the concern of so many magnanimous spirits, and to extort vindications from the antagonists who come out armed to destroy it. Perhaps the explanation is to be sought in Aristotle's famous sentence, "All men by nature desire to know." Perhaps the justification has been furnished by Seneca himself, who elsewhere asks why we instruct our children in liberal studies, and answers, "Not because they can give virtue, but because they prepare the mind to the receiving of it." Possibly, then, virtue may sometimes be best suggested by indirection; perhaps, too, the same is true of taste and insight; it may be that they come not with observation, or at least not exclusively with observation; it may be that they who devotedly study any aspect of great works receive of their spirit, even as one may approach the one spirit of Nature through the different channels of astronomy, chemistry, and zoology. A lover of literature and of all forms of beauty, too early lost to his University and the world—I refer to the late Professor McLaughlin—in an essay in which he pleaded for the recognition of the spiritual element in literature, was yet fain to admit: "The first steps toward the desired results must be prosaic; people must train themselves, or be trained, to see what is on the surface, to grow conscious of metrical differences, for instance; not to remain quite blind to the real meaning beneath a figurative turn; even to come to recognize that there is a figurative turn."

If we could take this view to heart, perhaps the difficulties which perplex so many earnest seekers after truth, as they consider the subject, would vanish away, or at any rate become less formidable. According to this mode of looking

at the matter, taste and insight and delicacy of perception are by no means common in an era of universal education, nor indeed in any era whatever; the person who possesses them only in a rudimentary degree is as likely to be repelled as attracted by a sudden revelation of their austere charms; in this, as in everything else, the natural progress is by easy stages from the phenomenal to the noumenal, from the things of sense to the things of the spirit; and accordingly the science which undertakes to deal with the forms in which the human spirit has, in various epochs, manifested itself, especially through the medium of literature, must be prepared to take account of the phenomenal no less than the noumenal, and accompany the seeker along the whole scale of ascent from the one to the other.

But is there any such science? There is; its name is Philology; and in no other sense than as designating this science should the term 'philology' be used, unless with some qualifying term which limits its meaning in a specific and unmistakable manner.

The function of the philologist, then, is the endeavor to relive the life of the past; to enter by the imagination into the spiritual experiences of all the historic protagonists of civilization in a given period and area of culture; to think the thoughts, to feel the emotions, to partake the aspirations, recorded in literature; to become one with humanity in the struggles of a given nation or race to perceive and attain the ideal of existence; and then to judge rightly these various disclosures of the human spirit, and to reveal to the world their true significance and relative importance.

In compassing this end, the philologist will have much to do; much that is not only laborious, but that even, in itself considered, might justly be regarded as distasteful, or even repellent. He must examine and compare the records of the human spirit bequeathed us by the past, and, before doing this, must often exhume them, perhaps in a mutilated condition, from the libraries and monasteries where they may

have been moldering for ages ; he must piece them together, where they have been separated and dispersed ; interpret them ; correct their manifest errors, so far as this may safely be done in the light of fuller information ; determine their meaning and their worth ; and then deliver them to the world, freed, as far as may be, from the injuries inflicted by time and evil chance, with their sense duly ascertained, their message clearly set forth, and their contribution to the sum of human attainment justly and sympathetically estimated.

This is the work that has been done, and is still in process of doing, for the Sacred Scriptures ; for Homer, Sophocles, and Pindar among the Greeks ; for Virgil, Lucretius, Tacitus, and Juvenal among the Romans ; for the Italian Dante and Ariosto ; for the French *chansons de geste*, no less than for Ronsard, Molière, and Rousseau ; for the *Nibelungenlied* and Goethe among the Germans ; for Cynewulf, Chaucer, Shakespeare, and Milton among the English ; and for a multitude of others of whom these may stand as types.

The ideal philologist is at once antiquary, palæographer, grammarian, lexicologist, expounder, critic, historian of literature, and, above all, lover of humanity. He should have the accuracy of the scientist, the thirst for discovery of the Arctic explorer, the judgment of the man of affairs, the sensibility of the musician, the taste of the connoisseur, and the soul of the poet. He must shrink from no labor, and despise no detail, by means of which he may be enabled to reach his goal more surely, and laden with richer results. Before traversing unknown seas, he must appropriate every discovery made by his predecessors on similar quests, and avail himself of every improvement upon their methods which his imagination can suggest, and his judgment approve. He will be instant in season and out of season. Whatsoever his hand finds to do he will do with his might. He will choose the task which humanity most needs to have performed, and at the same time that in which his own powers and special equipment can be most fully utilized ; and, when possible, he will give the

preference to such labors as shall afford play and outreach to his nobler faculties, rather than to such as may dwarf and impoverish them.

According to the exigencies which circumstances create, or his own intuition perceives, he will edit dictionaries, like Johnson or Murray; make lexicons to individual authors, like Schmidt; compile concordances, like Bartlett or Ellis; investigate metre, like Sievers or Schipper; edit authors, as Skeat has edited Chaucer, Child the English and Scottish Ballads, and Furness Shakespeare; discourse on the laws of literature, like Sidney, or Ben Jonson, or Lewes, or Walter Pater; write literary biography, like Brandl or Dowden; or outline the features and progress of a national literature, like Ten Brink, or Stopford Brooke, or Taine.

The ideal philologist must, therefore, have gained him "the gains of various men, ransacked the ages, spoiled the climes." Yet withal he must be content, if fortune, or his sense of a potential universe hidden in his apparently insignificant task, will have it so, merely to settle *hoti's* business, properly base *own*, or give us the doctrine of the enclitic *de*—sure that posterity, while it may ungratefully forget him, will at least have cause to bless his name, as that of one without whose strenuous and self-sacrificing exertions the poets, the orators, the historians, and the philosophers would have less completely yielded up their meaning, or communicated their inspiration, to an expectant and needy world.

That the philologist, as such, is not necessarily a creative literary artist, is no impugment of his mission or its importance. Neither is he who expounds the law, or the doctrines of Christianity, necessarily a creative literary artist. Yet he may be; Erskine was, and Webster; and so were Robert South and Cardinal Newman in their sermons. To be learned is not necessarily to be dull, for Burke was learned, and Chaucer, and Cicero, and Homer. Petrarch was not dull; and all the philology of modern times goes back to Petrarch.

If we seek for philologists who may fairly be ranked among reputable authors, the brothers Grimm wrote fairy stories quite as charmingly as Perrault; Hallam says of Politian that his poem displayed more harmony, spirit, and imagination, than any that had been written since the death of Petrarch; and the same writer calls the *History and Annals* of Grotius a monument of vigorous and impressive language. Professor Lounsbury says of Tyrwhitt, "His literary taste can be described as almost unerring." The style of Erasmus has been called clear, lively, expressive rather than regular, sparkling with sallies and *verve*. Sainte Beuve, who by his profession of critic comes well within the definition of the philologist, is of course one of the literary glories of France. Croiset, the author of *La Poésie de Pindare*, is an author whom one finds it difficult to lay down when his book has once been taken in hand. Sellar's accounts of the Roman poets can be read with the utmost pleasure by any one at all interested in the subject. The charm of Max Müller's writing is well known. One might go on to enumerate Jebb, and Gildersleeve, and Jowett, and Mahaffy—but why extend a list which any one can continue for himself? Enough has been said to show that the pursuit of philology is not incompatible with literary power and grace—as why indeed should it be?

But it has been observed that dull men crowd into the profession, men who can only count and catalogue, or who, to employ the language of Chapman in *The Revenge of Bussy d'Ambois*, are

Of taste so much depraved, that they had rather  
Delight, and satisfy themselves to drink  
Of the stream troubled, wandering ne'er so far  
From the clear fount, than of the fount itself.

Alas, it is but too true! Heaven-sent geniuses are rare, and there is not room for all the dull men in the other professions. Moreover, great poets are sometimes averse to spending their lives in the professor's chair, when they can write *Idylls of*

*the King* and *Men and Women*. Also, there is no recipe by which to convert dull men into heaven-sent geniuses, and the preponderance of the former class everywhere is an evil not sufficiently to be deplored. Then, too, some of us must do the intellectual hewing of wood and drawing of water for the rest, and how should this be were no dull men to interest themselves in literature? Finally, we can always fall back upon the reasons assigned by Longinus—if it was indeed he who wrote the immortal *Treatise on the Sublime*—Longinus, a man whom Plotinus allowed to be a philologist, but in no sense a philosopher. Thus he moralizes: “It is a matter of wonder that in the present age, which produces many highly skilled in the arts of popular persuasion, many of keen and active powers, many especially rich in every pleasing gift of language, the growth of highly exalted and wide-reaching genius has, with a few rare exceptions, almost entirely ceased. . . . It is so easy, and so characteristic of human nature, always to find fault with the present. Consider, now, whether the corruption of genius is to be attributed, not to a world-wide peace, but rather to the war within us which knows no limit, which engages all our desires, yes, and still further to the bad passions which lay siege to us to-day, and make utter havoc and spoil of our lives. Are we not enslaved, nay, are not our careers completely shipwrecked, by love of gain, that fever which rages unappeased in us all, and love of pleasure?—one the most debasing, the other the most ignoble, of the mind’s diseases.” If there are no better men forthcoming as expounders of English literature, may it not be that the requisite talents are attracted to more lucrative pursuits rather than that the fault is with the tendency of education to become universal?

It is singular, however, that men whom no one would think of calling dull practise on occasion the arts that we have heard condemned. Thus Professor Dowden, in his very newest book, his volume of selections from Wordsworth, so far from thinking it a sin, in dealing with the poets, to “note



the changes of phrase they make in successive revisions," expressly says, "From no other English poet can lessons in the poetic craft so full, so detailed, and so instructive be obtained as those to be had by one who follows Wordsworth through the successive editions, and puts to himself the repeated question, 'For what reason was this change, for what reason was that, introduced?'" Gaston Paris, too, who is said to be unsurpassed as a lecturer on the felicities of style, is best known to the world by researches which quite surely fall under the condemnation already cited.

Philology is frequently considered to be identical with linguistics. This is an error which can not be sufficiently deprecated. It results in the estrangement of the study of language from that of literature, with which, in the interests of both, it should be most intimately associated. The study of language is apt to seem arid and repellent to those who do not perceive how essential it is to the comprehension of literature. The conception of linguistics as a totally independent branch of learning, and the bestowal upon it of the appellation which properly designates the whole study of the history of culture, especially through the medium of literature, is fraught with incalculable injury to the pursuit of both divisions of the subject. Professor Saintsbury deplores this separation in a recent work. He says too truly: "With some honorable exceptions, we find critics of literature too often divided into linguists who seem neither to think nor to be capable of thinking of the meaning or the melody, of the individual and technical mastery, of an author, a book, or a passage, and into loose aesthetic rhetoricians who will sometimes discourse on Æschylus without knowing a second aorist from an Attic perfect, and pronounce eulogies or depreciations on Virgil without having the faintest idea whether there is or is not any authority for *quamvis* with one mood rather than another." He adds: "It is not wonderful, though it is in the highest degree unhealthy, that the stricter scholars should be more or

less scornfully relinquishing the province of literary criticism altogether, while the looser æsthetics consider themselves entitled to neglect scholarship in any proper sense with a similarly scornful indifference."

I hope we shall all concur with Professor Saintsbury in this opinion. Such mutual distrust, not to say dislike, *is* in the highest degree unhealthy. Why should not all thoughtful students of English call themselves philologists, and thus recognize that they are all virtually aiming at the same thing, notwithstanding that they approach the subject from different points of view, and in practise emphasize different aspects of their common theme?

It may perhaps be objected that this would be equivalent to attributing an arbitrary and novel signification to the word philology. In this presence, I need only advert to the fact that in Germany the meaning I advocate is recognized as the only tenable one by all the recent authorities. More than a hundred years ago, Wolf, acting in part under the inspiration of Goethe, outlined the conception which in more recent times has been developed by Boeckh, and from him has been adopted by all the chief authors or editors of systematic treatises dealing with the philology of the various nations or races. While they differ more or less with respect to the expediency of including certain subdivisions of this department of knowledge in their survey, on the essential point such scholars as Paul, Gröber, Körting, and Elze, all agree. No one who has not reflected long and deeply upon the conception elaborated by Boeckh can realize how fruitful it proves, and how fully it satisfies the demand for a philosophy of our work which shall recognize at once the part played in its advancement by the intuitions of genius and by the humbler labors of the compiler and systematizer.

Many people are misled by forming a wrong notion of the etymology of the term we have been discussing. "Does not *λόγος* mean 'word?'" say they; "how then can philology

signify anything else than a study of words?"—whereupon they complacently identify philology with etymology. But the initial mistake is a serious one. If one traces the use of *φιλολογία* and *φιλόλογος* in classical Greek and Latin, he will find something quite different. The philologist was originally one who loved the tales of history or old romance, and then one who was fond of all sorts of learning which naturally grew out of this love for dwelling on the records of the past. Thus a philologist was distinctively literary in his tastes; not always philosophical, but always prevailingly literary. Since literature employed speech as its medium, he of course became an investigator of speech, but—and this is a most important consideration—his interest in language grew out of his interest in literature, and his dominant concern with language was in its capacity as the organ of literary communication. Boeckh has pointed out that a compound which would have expressed to the ancients what we often mean by linguistic study would have had to be formed with *γλῶσσα*—like our 'glossonomy'—and not with *λόγος*. It is the use of the expression 'comparative philology' in the sense of 'glossonomy' or 'glossology,' which has wrought the mischief. If one regards *λόγος* as standing for the typical revelation of itself by the human soul, and also of the faculty chiefly instrumental in effecting this revelation—for *oratio* and *ratio*, as the Romans said—the term philology assumes its rightful dignity and breadth, and designates one of the noblest employments to which a human being can dedicate himself. He who cherishes this ideal will not thereby become an ideal philologist, but he will be less likely to strive as one that beateth the air; he will perceive that his ultimate concern is with the human soul, and all his collecting, and comparing, and criticizing, will subserve the one end of enabling the voices of the past, and especially the thrilling and compelling voices, to sound more audibly and tunelessly in the ear of his own and future generations.

We must never forget that the philologist is a lover. As Pythagoras was not willing to be called a wise man, but only a lover of wisdom, and thus coined the word philosophy, so the philologist may well be content to call himself a lover too, a lover of the thrilling and compelling voices of the past. He becomes a philologist, if he is worthy of the name, because they have thrilled and compelled him; and he would fain devise means, however circuitous in appearance, by which to insure that they shall thrill and compel others. His sensibility is the measure of his devotion; and his devotion, while it may not be the measure of his success, is certainly its indispensable condition.

If then, philology, truly considered, enlists the head in the service of the heart; if it demands not only high and manifold discipline, but rich natural endowment; if its object is the revelation to the present of the spiritual attainments of the past; if it aims to win free access for the thoughts of the mightiest thinkers, and the dreams of the most visionary of poets; if it seeks to train the imagination to re-create the form and pressure of a vanished time, in order to stimulate our own age to equal or surpass its predecessors in whatever best illustrates and ennobles humanity; if there are not wanting numerous examples of poets who have been philologists, and philologists who have been essentially poets; and, finally, if philology is the only term which thus fully comprehends these various aspects of a common subject, and we have the most authoritative precedents for employing it in that signification; shall we willingly allow the word to be depreciated, and the largeness and unity of the corresponding conception imperiled, by consenting to employ it for the designation of a single branch of the comprehensive whole, and that the branch which, to the popular apprehension, least exhibits the real import and aim of the science? If not, and we are willing to be known as philologists in the truer and larger sense, can we not do something to make this sense the prevalent one, by consistently adhering to it in our practice, and,

so far as possible, inducing others to accept and adopt it? By thus doing, we shall not only be recognizing a truth which is indisputable, but also be promoting that harmony of opinions and sentiments without which the most strenuous individual efforts are certain to prove in some degree nugatory.

ALBERT S. COOK.